

**Testimony**  
**Appropriations Committee**  
**February 23, 2023**

**General Comments: HB-6659**  
**Governor's proposed budget for childcare and public education**

**Joelle Fishman, Chair, Connecticut Communist Party USA**

Sen Osten, Rep Walker, and members of the Committee,

My name is Joelle Fishman, I live in New Haven, and I am testifying on behalf of the Connecticut Communist Party and with Recovery for All to urge full funding for childcare and public education in the budget.

It is beyond heartbreaking to know children in my city who are so ready and anxious to learn and grow, and to know dedicated teachers in my city who are confronted with so many barriers to educating because the funding is not there for what is needed.

High school students have shared with me that they could not have math classes or other classes or could not access the library when they needed it because there was no teacher.

As well, during the pandemic and since, Care4Kids parents and providers are struggling to make ends meet, make child care accessible, get children ready for a strong start in public school, and enable parents to work.

Healthy communities are built on thriving schools and jobs with dignity and respect. A healthy state requires the delivery of equal, quality education to every child in every town and neighborhood. The saying “an injustice to one is an injustice to all” applies here. Inequity for any child hurts us all.

A study by the Education Trust correctly says, “States’ funding systems should ensure that districts receive significant additional state and local funding to support students from low-income families and English learners. In addition, state funding systems should ensure that districts serving high concentrations of students of color receive at least as much state and local funding as other districts.”

Shockingly, that study shows that Connecticut is more regressive in distribution of education funding than any other state except Nebraska and Texas

Here in the wealthiest state we can and should be the best, not the worst.. Immediate measures are required to correct the inequities in education funding in our state so every child has the chance to fulfill their potential, and no child is lacking for teachers and paraeducators. Their precious futures and the future of our whole state are in the balance.

We have the resources. Equity requires revenue. Fund our future. I urge that you increase and equalize funding for childcare and pre-K-12 public schools in the budget.